Government of Saskatchewan

Annual Report 1999-2000

Saskatchewan Labour

for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2000

Published by Authority of
The Honourable Joanne Crofford
Minister

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Letters of Transmittal

The Honourable Dr. Lynda M. Haverstock
Lieutenant Governor
Province of Saskatchewan

May it Please Your Honour:

I respectfully submit the Annual Report of the Department of Labour for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2000.

Joanne Crofford
Minister of Labour

The Honourable Joanne Crofford
Minister of Labour

Dear Madam:

I have the honour of submitting the Annual Report of the Department of Labour for the year ending March 31, 2000.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Morgan
Deputy Minister

Deputy Minister's Message

A thriving economy depends on the efficiency and co-operation of everyone within it. Recognizing that people are the province's most important resource, Saskatchewan Labour works with workers and employers to promote safe, fair and co-operative work practices that lead to increased productivity and economic well being. There are nearly 40,000 employers and approximately 500,000 working people in Saskatchewan. The legislation, programs and policies that Saskatchewan Labour administers affect every one of them in some way.

In the year under review, Saskatchewan Labour's Occupational Health and Safety Division enhanced its efforts to improve health and safety in the workplace by developing partnerships with the Workers' Compensation Board, the Saskatchewan Safety Council and industry safety associations to help workplaces improve health and safety programs. The division's partnership with the University of Saskatchewan's College of Medicine will result in a Chief Occupational Medical Officer being hired for Saskatchewan.

Employees and employers in Saskatchewan rely on the Labour Standards Branch for guidance and support in maintaining minimum labour standards and fairness in the workplace. The Labour Standards Call Centre provided information on workplace rights and responsibilities to more than 65,000 people this year.

Young workers are more likely than older workers to be injured at work. They are also more likely to have unfair work experiences. The department is meeting these challenges by helping young people prepare for work before they enter the labour force. The Prevention Services Branch, under the program title "Are You Ready for Work?", developed awareness and educational materials on health, safety and provincial labour standards for young people. The branch also developed a labour standards orientation package for all Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST) students and continued working with Saskatchewan Education to design resource materials for high school students.

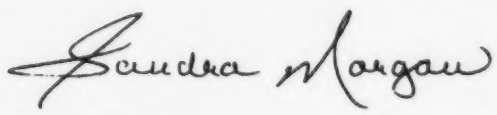
By 2001, a quarter of all new workers in Saskatchewan will be Aboriginal. Saskatchewan Labour is developing strategies to help Aboriginal people prepare for the workplace. The department is also working to help ensure workplaces are hospitable, inclusive and open to new perspectives through education and awareness activities.

Efforts to make Saskatchewan workplaces more co-operative were aided by the department's Labour Relations and Mediation Division. The division offered training in conflict resolution and joint problem-solving, as well as conciliation and mediation services. There is a greater demand for these programs than can be currently met.

The department continued developing ways to meet the needs of the growing number of people wanting immediate access to information about its programs and services. It continues to utilize the Internet to make information and awareness materials more widely accessible. At year end, for example, about 100,000 people had accessed the department's web site.

Safety, fairness and co-operation in the workplace are the building blocks of the increased productivity on which our prosperity depends. By working to improve safety, fairness and co-operation in Saskatchewan workplaces, the department's work benefits everyone in the province.

Yours sincerely,

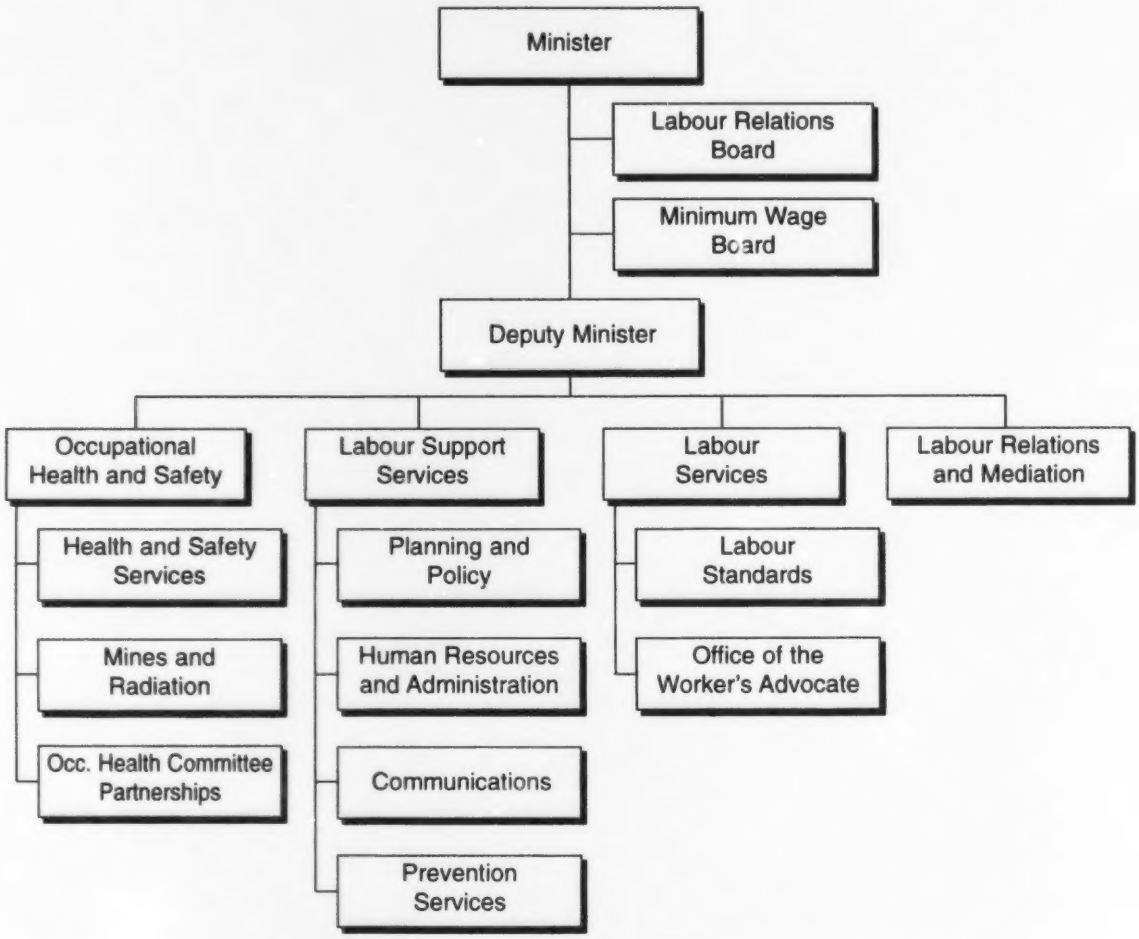


Sandra Morgan

Organization Chart

Department of Labour

March 31, 2000



Saskatchewan Labour's Mission

The Department of Labour works with employees and employers to achieve safe, fair, representative, co-operative workplaces that contribute to ongoing economic and social development in Saskatchewan.

Strategic Direction

The Department of Labour is committed to working with all Saskatchewan people to develop and maintain fair, safe, co-operative and representative workplaces. It administers the province's labour legislation, while working with employers and employees to prevent workplace accidents and illnesses, work stoppages or disruptions, and the unfair treatment of workers.

As part of its increasingly preventative approach, the department is taking steps to rise to the challenge of our province's changing demographics. By 2001, it is estimated that Aboriginal people will make up at least 25 per cent of new workers in the province. It is, therefore, critical that strategies are developed that are inclusive of Aboriginal people and that help them prepare for full participation in the workplace. At the same time, we must also help ensure that workplaces are hospitable, inclusive and open to new perspectives.

Research shows young workers are more likely to be injured on the job and experience other job-related problems than older workers are. The department continues to work with parents, educators and employers to help prepare young people to ensure their first work experiences are safe and positive ones.

Even greater emphasis will be placed on prevention as the department works with employers and employees to help prepare for the workplace of the 21st century. Education and prevention affect the overall well being of workers and contribute to the bottom line. A thriving economy depends upon the efficiency and co-operation of everyone working within it – employee and employer, union and non-union. Everyone benefits from such an economy. Labour policies and programs can have a significant positive impact on the economy through increases in productivity, but they are also social initiatives that have a broad impact on the lives of many Saskatchewan people. It is, therefore, incumbent upon the Department of Labour to look beyond its legislative requirements in its search for innovative solutions to the workplace challenges of the future.

Support Services Division

The Support Services Division provides staff support to, and partners with, program areas to:

- develop and coordinate research and policy for the department;
- develop strategic plans for the department;
- develop and administer department resources;
- develop and administer human resource services;
- develop and administer information technology programs;
- develop and administer communications and public relations initiatives;
- coordinate employment equity initiatives; and,
- develop programming that promotes safe, fair and co-operative workplace practices.

The division also works with other government departments and agencies to further the government's overall goals and objectives. This involvement includes the Assistant Deputy Minister's participation in the Assistant Deputy Minister's Forum, the Performance Measurement and Advisory Review Team, the Public Service Superannuation Plan, the Provincial Economic Strategy Committee, the Poverty Reduction Committee and the Assistant Deputy Minister's Committee.

Planning and Policy Branch

In 1999-2000, Planning and Policy Branch activities contributed to the department's overall goal of regulating and promoting health and safety, co-operation, fairness and equity in Saskatchewan workplaces. Branch work included research, strategic planning, policy development and legislative drafting, as well as providing policy and legal advice on a broad range of labour issues.

Clients

Branch clients include the management and staff of the department, workers, employers, labour stakeholders, the public and other government departments and agencies.

Objectives

- Develop sound legislation to implement public policy
- Provide clients with reliable information to assist them in decision-making
- Undertake research and policy analysis to foster understanding of labour/workplace issues
- Provide professional services to the department to support program development and operation
- Ensure that the department's position is accurately conveyed in interdepartmental policies/initiatives

Services

- Draft labour legislation
- Research and analysis on labour issues
- Research and administrative support to the Minimum Wage Board
- Policy development and special project work within and outside of government
- Professional services in the areas of policy development and analysis, legal analysis and research
- Manage appointments of adjudicators, boards and commissions
- Research and analysis on matters before the International Labour Organization

- Track and catalogue collective bargaining agreements in the province
- Analyze union contracts, including wage rates and terms and conditions of work
- Research and analyze issues respecting women in employment
- Research issues respecting work and minority group members
- Maintain the department labour library

1999-2000 Accomplishments

- Developed policy and legislation to resolve labour relations issues in the construction industry
- Developed an amendment to *The Health Labour Relations Reorganization Act* to allow the health care sector to further develop employee-employer relationships
- Developed policy and legislation to reinstate workers' compensation benefits and provide a one-time gratuitous payment to eligible widows whose Workers' Compensation Board spousal benefits were terminated due to remarriage or entering into a common law relationship prior to September 1, 1985
- Provided statistical analysis to other branches on issues including Workers' Compensation Board injury statistics, as well as youth and Aboriginal employment issues
- Completed the annual survey of union membership in Saskatchewan
- Developed Saskatchewan's position on labour issues for inclusion in Canada's response to the International Labour Organization
- Drafted contracts for the provision of services to the department
- Completed research for use at meetings of the Canadian Association of Administrators of Labour Legislation (CAALL) and the Canadian Labour and Business Centre
- Coordinated appointments to the Labour Relations Board, Farm Health and Safety Council, Workers' Compensation Board, and Occupational Health and Safety adjudicators and Labour Standards adjudicators
- Managed a number of labour policy issues (e.g., shortline railways, the construction industry, workers' compensation, Aboriginal self-government)
- Co-ordinated and prepared briefing materials on labour issues for the Minister and Cabinet
- Provided research and analysis for the Mines Regulations Review Committee
- Maintained a library of 700 union contracts, covering approximately 100,000 workers
- Provided research and analysis to the Saskatchewan Minimum Wage Board
- Worked with other departments to help facilitate the social and economic inclusion of people with disabilities
- Coordinated departmental employment equity activities
- Worked with other departments to further the government's overall employment equity objectives
- Worked on the government's position on employment insurance issues
- Collaborated with other departments on Aboriginal policy issues
- Worked on the federal-provincial Strategic Initiatives Program to enhance labour force participation by ensuring unemployed people in Saskatchewan continue to have access to employment programs and services throughout the province.
- Participated in the government-wide Performance Management and Accountability Initiative

- Provided policy analysis and advice to other government agencies on the possible implementation of the Multilateral Agreement on Investment

- Provided legal advice to the department on a wide spectrum of labour issues

Minimum Wage Board

The Board, pursuant to Part II of *The Labour Standards Act*, makes orders respecting minimum employment standards, including the minimum wage, minimum age, maximum work periods, maximum rates for room and board, and minimum rest periods.

The minimum wage in Saskatchewan was six dollars per hour throughout the fiscal year 1999-2000.

Prevention Services Branch

The Prevention Services Branch was established in July 1998. The branch provides education and training services.

Clients

Branch clients include the department, education systems and workplace organizations.

Objectives

- Develop partnerships and networks to address workplace issues

- Provide applied research to address workplace issues

- Develop education and training programs to promote safe, fair, co-operative and representative workplace practices

- Develop networks and provide services to promote farm safety

- Help young and/or new workers make a positive transition to the workforce

Services

- Develop curriculum resources for schools and post-secondary institutions on workplace issues such as occupational health and safety and labour standards

- Develop training materials and courses on occupational health and safety

- Coordinate the department's farm safety program

- Provide educational presentations at workplaces, schools and community events on farm safety, occupational health and safety, and labour standards

- Conduct research and provide findings on issues related to safe, fair, co-operative and representative workplaces

1999-2000 Accomplishments

- Launched a comprehensive series of awareness and education materials, ranging from wallet-size information cards to educational modules covering health, safety and labour standards, targeted for new and young workers under the program title "Are You Ready for Work?"

- Continued the partnership with Saskatchewan Education to design resource materials for the Practical and Applied Arts Courses, including general orientation modules for all high school students and specialized modules on health and safety for specific courses

- Provided an orientation package on labour legislation to all Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST) students and worked in partnership with SIAST to develop health and safety modules for specific programs

- Developed resource guides for high schools and SIAST to facilitate use of an interactive CD-ROM on occupational health and safety in Saskatchewan

- Developed two new publications, Setting up an Occupational Health and Safety Program: A Guide, and Elements of an Occupational Health and Safety Program, to assist Occupational Health Committees establish comprehensive workplace safety programs

- Updated resources on accident investigations, workplace inspections and other health and safety materials used with Occupational Health Committee training

- Worked with the Saskatchewan Farm Health and Safety Council to develop awareness and educational resource materials for schools and farm families promoting health and safety

- Delivered 67 farm safety presentations at schools and agricultural fairs

- Worked in partnership with the Saskatchewan Safety Council and the Saskatchewan Abilities Council to help high school students and farmers make over 165 school presentations on farm safety

- Provided 38 presentations on labour standards to industries, workplaces and schools

- Provided 13 conference workshops and displays on health and safety, labour standards and young workers

- Hired three educational consultants from First Nations and Metis communities to help develop and deliver programs that promote safe, fair, co-operative and representative workplaces

- Analyzed survey results on the workplace experiences of 1,800 Saskatchewan young people and analyzed the injury rates of workers under 25 years of age to provide prevention planning and benchmark data

Communications Branch

The Communications Branch provides strategic communications planning for the department and promotes department policies, programs and services.

Clients

The branch works with all other divisions, branches and program areas to provide strategic planning and other communications services. It also works with other government departments and agencies, the public, the media, as well as individuals and groups outside the department on special projects. Its main clients are the working people and employers of Saskatchewan.

Objectives

- Increase public awareness and understanding of department policies, programs and services
- Promote fair, co-operative, representative and healthy and safe workplaces
- Increase public understanding of, and support for, Saskatchewan's labour laws
- Increase staff awareness and understanding of department goals and objectives
- Ensure departmental communications initiatives are consistent, effective, cost-effective and timely
- Ensure communications initiatives are consistent with department goals and with overall government goals
- Develop partnerships for communications initiatives

Services

- Strategic communications planning
- Identification of appropriate communications methods for individual projects
- Professional development and implementation of public information programs and supporting materials
- Development and co-ordination of advertising
- Operation of the department's website
- Development of publications, including pre-press production
- Liaison with advertising agencies, printers and other suppliers
- Liaison with other government communications offices, including that of central government
- Special events planning and implementation
- Public and media relations
- Responding to public inquiries and referrals
- Joint communications initiatives with public and private sector external partners

1999-2000 Accomplishments

- Expanded information available through the department's website (www.labour.gov.sk.ca), and handled the e-mail correspondence from the site. There were approximately 100,000 visitors to the department's website during the year under review
- Prepared the department's strategic communications plan
- Prepared communications strategies and provided communications services for a wide range of department initiatives, including those related to the construction industry, *The Health Labour Relations Re-organization Act,* amendments to *The Workers' Compensation Act* and Regulations, as well as legislative and regulatory steps to address the concerns of widows whose workers' compensation benefits were affected by changes to the Canadian *Charter of Rights and Freedoms.*
- Undertook more than 135 new projects, including brochures, booklets, manuals and promotional items, for department divisions and branches, as well as 110 reprints

- Worked with Human Resources Development Canada and with representatives of safety stakeholders on North America Occupational Safety and Health Week projects

- Developed and initiated a media relations campaign to encourage awareness of and participation in the Farm Safety Poster Contest and Calendar

- Prepared speeches and background materials for the Minister of Labour and department officials on a variety of issues

- Developed materials for, and staffed display booths, at a variety of trade shows and conferences, including Agribition, the Farm Progress Show and the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour annual meeting

- Continued to build partnerships and sponsorships to develop more sustainable delivery mechanisms for department programs and services

Human Resources and Administration Branch

The Human Resources and Administration Branch provides staffing, financial and technical support to the department. The branch also works with other government departments and agencies, including the director's participation in the Financial Management Council, the Public Service Commission Regulations and Policy Review Steering Committee, and the Budget Review Subcommittee of the Performance Measurement and Advisory Review Team.

Human Resources Unit

The Human Resources Unit provides strategic direction for human resources for the department, the Labour Relations Board and Women's Secretariat.

Clients

The unit's clients are department, Labour Relations Board and Women's Secretariat staff.

Objectives

- Hire the most qualified people for the department

- Ensure staff have the skills needed to do their jobs

- Provide staff with skills for future jobs

- Increase staff diversity

- Improve the way services are provided

- Promote a safe and healthy workplace

- Help employees balance work and family

Services

- Coordinate all hiring of staff

- Review job classifications

- Identify and coordinate staff training needs

- Interpret and administer the union contract

- Promote employment equity

- Support work planning and staff evaluation

- Support executive management in all human resource issues

1999-2000 Accomplishments

- Upheld the union agreement

- Hired 12 permanent staff, including two members of employment equity groups, for the department, the Labour Relations Board and the Women's Secretariat

- Completed five classification requests, reviewed four vacancies to ensure classification levels were appropriate and helped management and employees with classification appeals

- Sent 143 staff to 141 training/staff development events; various staff conferences were held to review policies, procedures and legislative changes
- Processed 519 transactions to change employee records
- Developed and distributed the department's computer usage policy
- Met employment equity hiring targets with assistance from a joint union-management committee
- Helped the Union/Management Committee involve employees in identifying workplace issues, building a positive work environment, improving communication, empowering staff and building consensus
- Arranged for Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Program training for all employees
- Helped managers and staff deal with performance problems and organizational change
- Participated on the department Occupational Health and Safety Committee
- Represented the department on various internal and inter-departmental committees

Administrative Services Unit

The Administrative Services Unit provides administrative support to the department, the Labour Relations Board and the Women's Secretariat.

Clients

Unit clients include department staff, other government agencies and boards and the public.

Objectives

- Budget planning
- Accounting and administration systems
- Keeping administrative policy and procedures current
- Provision of goods and services for all staff
- Information technology use and training Services
- Organize the budget process
- Keep track of department revenue and spending
- Pay the bills
- Prepare financial, human resource and administration reports and briefing material
- Buys goods and services as needed
- Maintain equipment inventory
- Manage the information technology plan, including:
  - planning
  - selecting equipment
  - building computer systems
  - staff training
  - operating the computer 'help desk'
  - maintain the computer network

1999-2000 Accomplishments

- Paid bills on time, exceeding government average 95% of the time
- Kept accurate records of spending
- Improved financial reporting
- Promoted the Computer Usage Policy
- Met staff needs for goods and services
- Reached Y2K compliance for all the department's computer systems and successfully made the transition to the new millennium

Occupational Health and Safety Division

The Occupational Health and Safety Division works to prevent work-related injuries and illness. The division assists occupational health committees, workers, supervisors and employers to fulfil their responsibility for the control of workplace hazards, ensures compliance with *The Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993* and *Regulations*, and provides technical assistance in the identification and control of hazards that may cause injury or illness.

Clients

The services of the division are available to all workers and employers in Saskatchewan, occupational health committees and worker occupational health and safety representatives.

Objectives

The objectives of the division are to:

- Ensure occupational health committees are effective and that the system of internal responsibility is functioning properly
- Ensure compliance with the Act and regulations and respond to health and safety concerns
- Assist occupational health committees in the identification and control of hazards
- Increase the number of active occupational health committees
- Ensure adequate training in their role and responsibilities for controlling workplace hazards is provided to occupational health committee members and supervisors
- Respond to concerns about toxic substances and investigate cases where illness may have resulted from exposure
- Support implementation of the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS)
- Ensure stringent control of both radiological and conventional health and safety hazards in Saskatchewan uranium mines
- Promote health and safety through production and distribution of publications, presentations, video loans, displays, and other media

Services

The division performs the following services:

- Develops and implements standards for the control of workplace hazards in the form of legislation, regulations, codes of practice and uranium mining surface lease conditions
- Inspects workplaces to assist employers, workers and occupational health committees fulfil their role in the day to day control of hazards, and to enforce compliance with the Act and regulations
- Provides advice and assistance for the establishment of new occupational health committees and the revitalization of existing committees
- Provides advice and assistance for the establishment and implementation of occupational health and safety programs and management systems
- Investigates fatalities and serious industrial accidents
- Provides professional opinions on toxicological concerns to workers, employers, occupational health committees and physicians
- Enforces the requirements of WHMIS
- Enforces surface lease conditions regarding both radiological and conventional health and safety in provincial mines
- Collects and analyzes data to determine risks to health and safety and to evaluate and control hazardous work processes
- Provides information on health and safety standards in the form of guidelines, hazard alerts and other publications

- Reviews Environmental Impact Assessments and proposals for projects which involve toxic substances or hazardous conditions

- Administers examinations to certify the competence of mine supervisors, blasters, hoist operators and mine rescue personnel

- Makes presentations to organizations and in workplaces to promote awareness and provide information on safe work practices

- Prepares and delivers occupational health and safety training courses

- Maintains a health and safety publication inventory

- Administers a health and safety video library

- Participates in activities and supports the Northern Mine Monitoring Secretariat

1999-2000 Accomplishments

- Established partnerships with the Workers' Compensation Board (WCB), industry safety associations and the Saskatchewan Safety Council to assist employers and occupational health committees with the development and implementation of an effective occupational health and safety program, including the publication and distribution of two documents to help employers and occupational health committees develop and implement health and safety programs, delivery of a workshop throughout the province and auditing the programs at 130 workplaces by division occupational health officers

- Undertook a targeted inspection initiative that resulted in 252 overall reviews of employers on WCB surcharge list because these employers account for a disproportionate share of workplace injuries in Saskatchewan

- Undertook projects to monitor compliance with *The Occupational Health and Safety Act* and *Regulations* in residential construction, sawmills/forestry, pipeline construction and livestock operations

- Conducted inspections of pork manure handling operations and partnered with Sask Pork, the Centre for Agricultural Medicine, the Prairie Swine Centre, the Grain Services Union, SIAST and the Veterinary Infectious Disease Organization to hold a health and safety workshop for hog production workers in conjunction with Pork Central

- Partnered with the Centre for Agricultural Medicine and Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food to develop a guideline that sets best practices for the hog industry, including worker training needs

- Developed an industry-accepted bio-security protocol addressing the risk of infection to swine herds as a result of officers entering hog barns during site visits

- Continued partnerships with the Saskatchewan School Trustees Associations, the League of Education Administrators, Directors and Superintendents, the Saskatchewan Association of School Business Officials, the Saskatchewan Teachers Federation, the Canadian Union of Public Employees and the Service Employees International Union to develop a joint, sector approach to addressing health and safety in schools, including delivery of 19 school-specific Level 1 occupational health committee training sessions to over 400 committee members and several partnership meetings

- Undertook initiatives to support mine safety, including developing a system to maintain mine accident statistics, revising the Mine Rescue Manual, providing a mine safety unit inspector to act as Chief Judge for the annual Mine Rescue Competition, developing a database for recording the testing of hoist ropes and initiating the revision of the explosives examination

- An ongoing grant from the division to the University of Saskatchewan's College of Medicine was approved as part of the partnership between the division and the University to hire a fully trained specialist in occupational medicine to serve as both the Chief Occupational Medical Officer (COMO) for the division and as a specialized medical resource at the University

- Coordinated the review of the adequacy of *The Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993* and its administration for the OH&S Council

- Implemented a Policy and Procedures Manual to address the consistency and uniformity of policies and procedures for division inspections and enforcement initiatives

- Conducted 2,900 inspections and issued 3,640 contraventions

- Initiated eight prosecutions

- Concluded 185 accident/incident investigations and 28 fatality investigations

- Assisted in the establishment of 420 new occupational health committees

- Conducted targeted inspections at 560 residential construction sites, 69 sawmills/forestry operations, 42 pipeline construction sites, and 54 intensive livestock operations

- Responded to 59 refusals to work in unusually dangerous situations under Section 23 of *The Occupational Health and Safety Act*, 33 complaints of discriminatory actions because of involvement with Occupational Health and Safety activity and 40 cases of alleged harassment

- Examined 996 samples collected in workplaces in the hygiene laboratory

- Provided equipment to workers in 255 indoor workplaces to investigate concerns

- Administered 20 mine rescue examinations, 127 supervisor examinations, four hoist operator examinations and 67 blasting explosives examinations

- Made in-plant inspections of mine rescue training equipment and training facilities

- Conducted brake checks at 19 mines and five ventilation surveys in underground mines

- Responded to 112 concerns about toxic substances and audited nine supplier Material Safety Data Sheets

- Investigated the cause of illness at 15 workplaces

- Reviewed 43 environmental impact proposals

- Prepared new guidelines, fact sheets and brochures on:
  - Chemical Substances Guidelines,
  - Cytotoxic Drugs, Protecting Emergency Response Workers from Infectious Diseases, and
  - Safe Business is Smart Business, A Guide for Employers

- Revised guidelines, fact sheets and brochures on:
  - Hantavirus Disease
  - PCB and Light Ballasts
  - Plumbers and PVC Pipe Glue
  - WHMIS and Consumer Products
  - Selling Controlled Products to Farms
  - Safety Guidelines for Commercial Pesticide Operators
  - Video Display Terminal (VDT) Code of Practice
  - Skating Arena Air Quality
  - Mercury and Dental Workers
  - Hot Conditions Guidelines
  - Cold Conditions Guidelines
  - Extremely Low Frequency (ELF) Electric and Magnetic Fields
  - Solar and Artificial Ultraviolet Radiation
  - Updated information on the division and its publications on the Saskatchewan Labour website

- Following changes in the structure and delivery of Level 1 and 2 Occupational Health Committee training, delivered 159 occupational health and safety training courses to 3,480 people

- Promoted opportunities for joint committee training and granted approval to the first approved training agency

- Provided 214 presentations to groups of employers, workers or their organizations and loaned 1,336 videos

- Continued holding meetings of the industry-labour working group to compile the recommendations for updating *The Saskatchewan Mines Regulations*; the group has met 14 times since its inception in 1997

- Maintained a system for monitoring occupational health committee activity and for following-up with committees that fail to meet

- Provided hundreds of responses to inquiries, including 271 related to harassment and 504 requests for technical support

- Addressed 16 appeals of officers' decisions to the director or to adjudicators

Radiation Safety Unit

The Radiation Safety Unit of the Occupational Health and Safety Division works to ensure that workers and the public are not exposed unnecessarily to either ionizing or non-ionizing radiation. This is achieved by providing consultation and advice to equipment owners, employers and individuals at risk of exposure, and by enforcing the requirements of *The Radiation Health and Safety Act, 1985* and *The Radiation Health and Safety Regulations.*

Objectives

The objective of the Radiation Safety Unit is to implement the requirements of *The Radiation Health and Safety Act* and regulations.

Services

- Promote the safe and proper use of radiation by conducting inspections of radiation equipment and by auditing quality assurance programs

- Work closely with owners, technologists and service engineers to ensure that the diagnostic benefits of radiation are maximized while radiation exposures to patients are minimized

- Provide medical physics support to accredited mammography facilities

- Provide consultation services to users and owners of radiation equipment and radiation sources

- Make presentations to organizations and in workplaces to promote awareness and provide information on radiation safety procedures

- Review occupational radiation exposure reports and investigates high exposures

- Maintain a radiation laboratory to ensure the proper calibration of radiation monitoring equipment, perform wipe test analysis of sealed radioactive sources and analyze radon monitoring devices

- Provide immediate response in the event of a radiation emergency in the province

- Liaise with federal and provincial agencies across Canada to work toward the delivery of a unified radiation safety program

1999-2000 Accomplishments

- Provided inspections and consulting services to owners of radiation equipment by performing 325 on-site visits, 34 radiation installation plan approvals and 674 medical and dental postal quality assurance tests

- Performed 1,316 tests and calibrations in the unit's radiation laboratory

- Delivered 17 presentations on radiation safety issues

- Provided administrative and technical support on radiation issues for the Mines Safety Unit and trained a Mines Radiation Safety Technician

- Reviewed ionizing radiation dosimeter reports for approximately 5,200 workers

- Participated in the Uranium Miner Cohort Study, an epidemiological study of Saskatchewan uranium miners being conducted by the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan and the uranium mining industry

- Conducted a radon survey of northern schools in cooperation with Northern Health Services and the Environmental Quality Committees

- Developed a guideline on ultraviolet hazards for tanning salon owners and operators and conducted a survey of tanning salons in Saskatchewan making 205 visits

- Chaired the government/industry Working Group developing Canadian guidelines for the handling of naturally occurring radioactive materials (NORM)

- Worked with federal and provincial radiation protection agencies across Canada to develop harmonized standards for radiation safety and guidelines for ultraviolet and ELF radiation

Labour Services Division

Labour Standards Branch

The basic rules for work for most people in Saskatchewan are set out in *The Labour Standards Act*. The Labour Standards Branch promotes and enforces those rules.

Clients

The services of the branch are available to all residents of Saskatchewan, including employees and employers.

Objectives

- Respond to employee complaints to help achieve fairness in the workplace
- Provide information about labour standards law
- Apply the labour standards rules fairly

Services

- Inform people about their rights and responsibilities at work
- Provide the public with information on labour standards law
- Investigate complaints about unpaid wages
- Collect wages owed to workers
- Inspect workplaces to uphold the law
- Help employees and employers deal with work problems relating to labour standards law
- Promote understanding of labour standards through school systems, community groups and other agencies

1999-2000 Accomplishments

- Worked with the Prevention Services Branch in the delivery of labour standards information sessions
- Had all staff take all five modules of the Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Program training
- Responded to more than 65,000 telephone inquiries received at the Labour Standards Call Centre
- Investigated 2,559 wage complaints, held 20 Wage Assessment Adjudication hearings and found $1.02 million was owed to workers

Office of the Worker's Advocate

The Office of the Worker's Advocate (OWA) helps injured workers with their worker's compensation claims.

Clients

The OWA provides services to injured workers and their dependants who disagree with a decision made by the Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) concerning their claim for compensation.

Objectives

The OWA helps injured workers and their dependants get the benefits they are entitled to under *The Workers' Compensation Act, 1979* by helping them appeal decisions made by the WCB.

Services

- Provides expert information and advice to injured workers and their dependants about their claims for compensation
- Advocates for injured workers and their dependents when they appeal WCB decisions
- Conducts research to prove compensation claims
- Gathers information from health care professionals, unions, workers, employers and occupational health committees for appeals of WCB decisions

- Prepares and submits written appeals of WCB decisions
- Represents injured workers and dependants at appeal hearings
- Helps injured workers understand workers' compensation law, programs and appeal procedures
- Works with unions and other groups to improve policies for injured workers
- Studies changes to legislation, policies and programs that would help injured workers
- Makes recommendations to both government and *The Workers' Compensation Act* Committee of Review on the Act and its administration
- Works with unions and other groups to develop better ways of representing injured workers

1999-2000 Accomplishments

- Surveyed workers with active files to determine which cases should have priority
- Continued researching and analyzing issues affecting WCB decisions as well as the demand for advocacy services in order to help injured workers make more effective appeals
- Met with and participated in conference calls with representatives from other provincial advocates/advisors offices to exchange ideas and discuss common concerns
- Made presentations to and conducted workshops on dealing with workers compensation issues for various interest groups
- Created a position of Intake Clerk to provide greater efficiencies within the OWA

Labour Relations and Mediation Division

The Labour Relations and Mediation Division helps unions and management deal with problems like lockouts and strikes. It also provides mediation and training to help labour and management improve communications and relationships in order to prevent workplace stoppages.

Clients

The division works with labour and management in unionized workplaces.

Objectives

- Help employers and employees solve workplace-related problems
- Help shorten strikes and lockouts
- Help unions and management reach agreement in collective bargaining negotiations
- Help labour and management improve relationships
- Track the results of the contract bargaining process

Services

- Conciliation of collective bargaining disputes and workplace adjustment plans
- Mediation of grievance disputes before arbitration is needed
- Training on conflict resolution, joint problem solving and interest-based negotiation
- Appointments, upon request, of chairpersons for arbitration, special mediation and expedited arbitration
- Mediation of disputes over issues not covered by standard grievance procedures
- Providing both management and unions with information on their obligations under *The Trade Union Act*
- Providing advice and technical help in industrial relations
- Act as agents for the Saskatchewan Labour Relations Board (SLRB) on first contract applications
- Conducting certification/de-certification votes for the SLRB
- Providing mediation services for the SLRB to resolve disputes without a formal hearing

1999-2000 Accomplishments

- Provided conciliation services in 39 new cases
- Provided mediation services in 50 grievance disputes
- Conducted 13 conflict resolution mediations (not connected to a grievance)
- Conducted two information sessions on behalf of the SLRB
- Provided mediation services for one new union local that asked the SLRB for first contract arbitration
- Conducted 15 two-day conflict resolution/interest based negotiation training sessions (average of 24 people per session)
- Made 10 presentations outlining the joint problem solving process and services of the division
- Made 85 arbitrator appointments on behalf of the Minister
- Provided services for nine votes of the SLRB
- Provided 250 technical/advisory consultations

Department Financial Overview

Table 1

Department Financial Overview 1999-2000

	1999-2000 Budget ($thousands)	Budget Full-time Equivalents	1999-2000 Actuals ($thousands)	Actuals Full-time Equivalents
Administrative Services[1]	1,228	22.4	1,245 *1	21.6
Accommodation and Central Services	1,100	-	1,064	-
Labour Standards	1,563	32.0	1,561	31.6
Labour Relations and Mediation	546	6.0	404 *2	5.0
Labour Relations Board[2]	556	6.0	582 *3	5.8
Labour Support Services[3]	1,941	27.0	2,046 *4	29.5
Occupational Health and Safety	3,826	53.0	3,805	53.1
Worker's Advocate	424	8.0	444 *5	8.5
Total – Department	11,184	154.4	11,151	155.2 *6

1. This branch includes the offices of the Minister and Deputy Minister, and the Human Resources Branch.
2. Labour Relations Board information is contained in a separate annual report.
3. This division includes the Assistant Deputy Minister, Planning and Policy Branch, the Communications Branch, and the Prevention Services Branch.

Variance explanations:

*1 Miscellaneous operating expenses
*2 Vacancy management
*3 Level of board activities
*4 Systems and project expenditures
*5 Caseload support
*6 Additional .8FTE associated with Aboriginal and Work and Family programming

Significant revenue:

- Reimbursement from Workers' Compensation Board ($6,331,410)
- Registration fees for radiation equipment ($35,760)

Significant assets*:

The department has four key asset items:

1. 154.4 full-time equivalents
2. Net book value for Radiation and Hygiene Lab and equipment $148,164
3. Net book value for computer hardware, software and systems development $310,729
4. Net book value for office equipment and furniture $63,161

*In accordance with the government's capital asset disclosure policy.

Table 2

2000-2001 Estimated Budget

Program	2000-2001 ($thousands)
Administration	1,445
Accommodation and Central Services	1,233
Labour Standards	1,627
Labour Relations Board	603
Labour Support Services*	2,315
Worker's Advocate	464
Occupational Health and Safety	4,425
Labour Relations and Mediation	546
Total	12,658
Full-time equivalent staff	161.9

*Includes Assistant Deputy Minister, Planning and Policy, Communications and Prevention Services.

Appendix

Legislation Administered by Saskatchewan Labour

The Building Trades Protection Act
The Construction Industry Labour Relations Act, 1992
The Employment Agencies Act
The Fire Departments Platoon Act
The Health Labour Relations Reorganization Act
The Human Resources, Labour and Employment Act
The Labour-Management Disputes (Temporary Provisions) Act
The Labour Standards Act
The Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993
The Radiation Health and Safety Act, 1985
The Trade Union Act
The Victims of Workplace Injuries Day of Mourning Act
The Wages Recovery Act

For more information,
call the Communications Branch at 787-3637
or visit our website: www.labour.gov.sk.ca